FREE COMIC BOOK DAY

# CONAN THE BARBARIAN

ZUB | DE LA TORRE | VILLARRUBIA

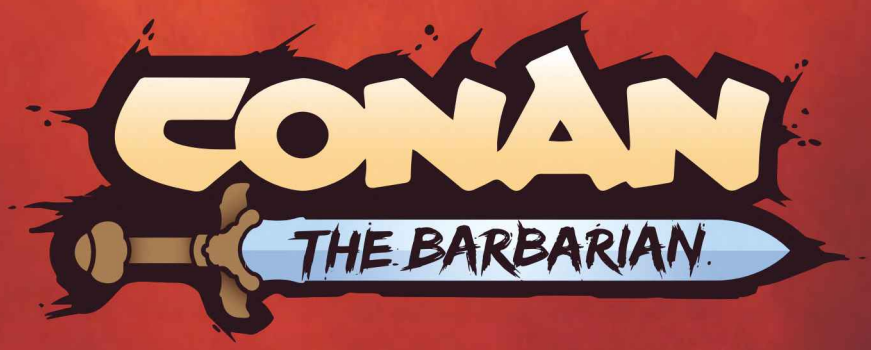
HEROIC Signatures

TITAN COMICS

TITAN-COMICS.COM

Rated M Mature/18+

COVER
ROB DE LA TORRE




HEROIC Signatures

**PRESIDENT**
FREDRIK MALMBERG

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & EVP**
JOAKIM ZETTERBERG

**EDITOR**
MATT. MURRAY

**PROJECT MANAGER**
ASHLEY HODGKINS

**BRAND MANAGER**
MARCOS CRONANDER

**CONSIGLIERE**
STEVE BOOTH

TITAN COMICS

**GROUP EDITOR**
JAKE DEVINE

**SENIOR CREATIVE EDITOR**
DAVID LEACH

**EDITOR**
PHOEBE HEDGES

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**
CALUM COLLINS

**PRODUCTION CONTROLLERS**
CATERINA FALQUI AND
KELLY FENLON

**PRODUCTION MANAGER**
JACKIE FLOOK

**ART DIRECTOR**
OZ BROWNE

**SALES AND CIRCULATION MANAGER**
STEVE TOTHILL

**MARKETING COORDINATOR**
LAUREN NODING

**PUBLICITY & SALES COORDINATOR**
ALEXANDRA ICIEK

**PUBLICITY MANAGER**
WILL O'MULLANE

**DIGITAL & MARKETING \MANAGER**
JO TEATHER

**HEAD OF RIGHTS**
JENNY BOYCE

**HEAD OF CREATIVE & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
DUNCAN BAIZLEY

**PUBLISHING DIRECTORS**
JOHN DZIEWIATKOWSKI AND RICKY CLAYDON

**GROUP OPERATIONS DIRECTOR**
ALEX RUTHEN

**EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT**
ANDREW SUMNER

**PUBLISHERS**
VIVIAN CHEUNG AND NICK LANDAU

**FOR RIGHTS INFORMATION CONTACT:** JENNY.BOYCE@TITANEMAIL.COM

**DIRECT DISTRIBUTION:** DIAMOND COMICS DISTRIBUTORS

**NEWSSTAND DISTRIBUTION AND ADVERTISING SALES:**
TOTAL PUBLISHERS SERVICES INC. JOHN DZIEWIATOWSKI
JOHND@TITANPUBLISHINGUSA.COM
PHONE: 630-851-7683

**WWW.TITAN-COMICS.COM**
TWITTER @COMICSTITAN
FACEBOOK.COM/COMICSTITAN

Conan: The Barbarian FCBD May 2023. Published by Titan Comics, a division of Titan Publishing Group, Ltd. 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP. Titan Comics is a registered trademark of Titan Publishing Group, Ltd. © 2023 Conan Properties International LLC ("CPI"). CONAN, CONAN THE BARBARIAN, CONAN THE CIMMERIAN, HYBORIA, THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, and related logos, characters, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks or registered trademarks of CPI. Heroic Signatures is a trademark of Cabinet Licensing LLC. TCN 4296

# NEMEDIAN CHRONICLES

"Know, oh prince, that between the years when the oceans drank Atlantis and the gleaming cities, and the years of the rise of the Sons of Aryas, there was an Age undreamed of, when shining kingdoms lay spread across the world like blue mantles beneath the stars — Nemedia, Ophir, Brythunia, Hyperborea, Zamora with its dark-haired women and towers of spider-haunted mystery, Zingara with its chivalry, Koth that bordered on the pastoral lands of Shem, Stygia with its shadow-guarded tombs, Hyrkania whose riders wore steel and silk and gold. But the proudest kingdom of the world was Aquilonia, reigning supreme in the dreaming west.

Hither came Conan, the Cimmerian, black-haired, sullen-eyed, sword in hand, a thief, a reaver, a slayer, with gigantic melancholies and gigantic mirth, to tread the jeweled thrones of the Earth under his sandalled feet."

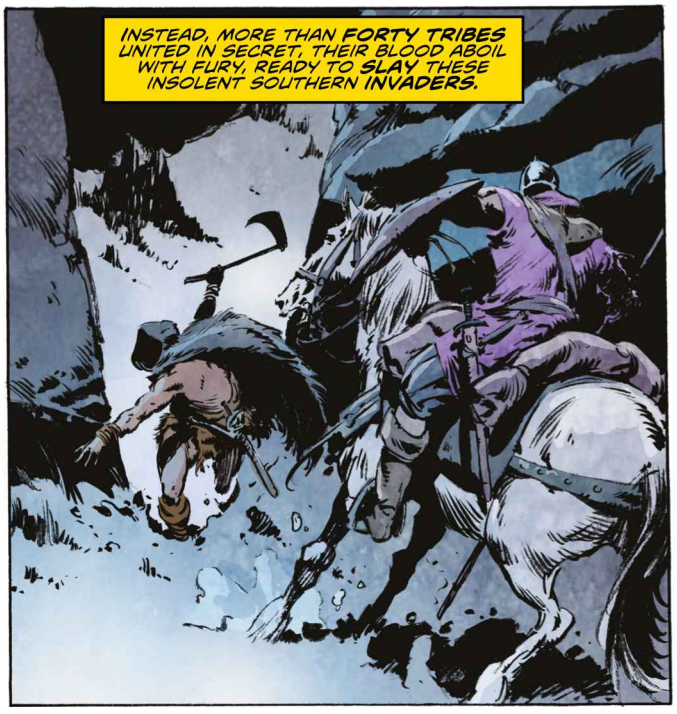
— THE NEMEDIAN CHRONICLES

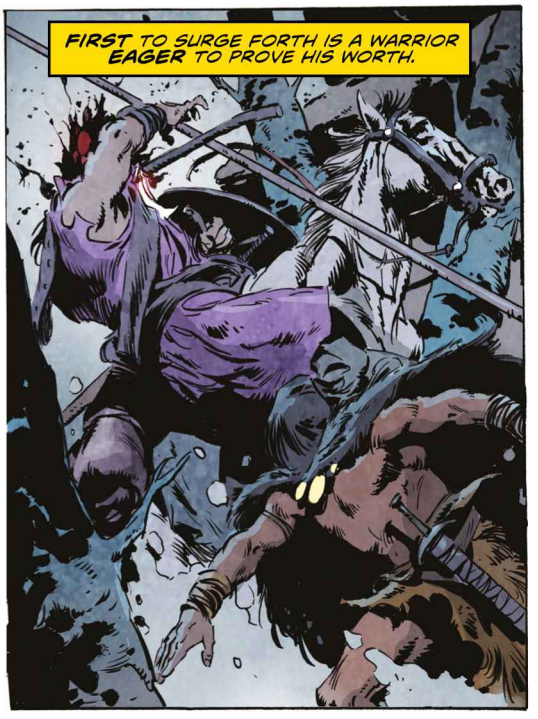
# ON THE ROAD OF KINGS...

VENARIUM. Aquilonian forces surge northward in their conquest of the barbaric northern territories. The clans of Cimmeria have banded together to defend their southern border from the "civilized" invaders. Among the Cimmerian numbers is CONAN, the son of a blacksmith, about to have his first true taste of battle…

LEGENDS CAN BE FORGED IN UNLIKELY PLACES.
THIS LEGEND BEGINS IN THE GREY-GRIPPED LAND OF CIMMERIA AT A REMOTE FORTRESS KNOWN AS VENARIUM.
WHEN AQUILONIANS PUSHED THEIR BORDERS NORTHWARD WITH EYES ON CONQUEST, THEY DESTROYED THREE CIMMERIAN VILLAGES.

ARROGANTLY, THEY ASSUMED THE DISPARATE BARBARIANS OF THE REGION WOULD FLEE FROM THEIR MILITARY MIGHT.


INSTEAD, MORE THAN FORTY TRIBES UNITED IN SECRET, THEIR BLOOD ABOIL WITH FURY, READY TO SLAY THESE INSOLENT SOUTHERN INVADERS.

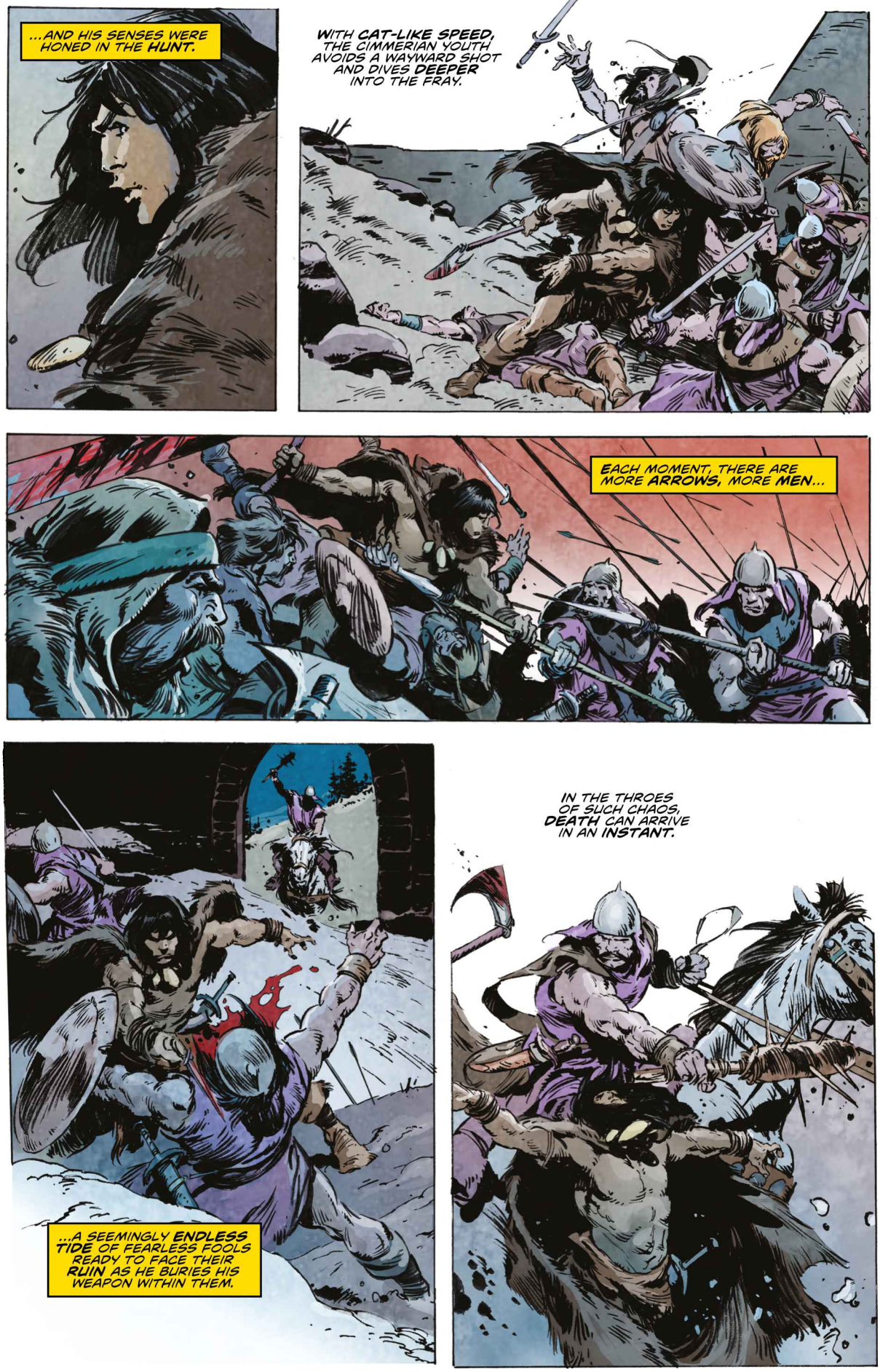

FIRST TO SURGE FORTH IS A WARRIOR EAGER TO PROVE HIS WORTH.

THE SAVAGE SON OF A BLACKSMITH WHO WOULD ONE DAY WEAR A CROWN--
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
LOOKING FOR LANDS BEYOND
GRIM JIM ZUB WRITER
RAVAGING ROB DE LA TORRE ARTIST
VILLAINOUS JOSÉ VILLARRUBIA COLOR ARTIST
RIOTOUS RICHARD STARKINGS LETTERER
MERCILESS MATT. MURRAY EDITOR

IN AN INSTANT, THE AIR TURNS BRUTAL AND BLOODY. THE PENT-UP RAGE OF CIMMERIAN TRIBESMEN UNLEASHED UPON ARMORED AQUILONIAN SOLDIERS.

CONAN IS NOT INTIMIDATED BY THEIR SHARPENED SWORDS OR GLEAMING HELMS.

THOUGH UNTESTED ON A BATTLEFIELD, HIS BRAWN WAS BUILT BRINGING DOWN BEASTS...


...AND HIS SENSES WERE HONED IN THE HUNT.
WITH CAT-LIKE SPEED, THE CIMMERIAN YOUTH AVOIDS A WAYWARD SHOT AND DIVES DEEPER INTO THE FRAY.
EACH MOMENT, THERE ARE MORE ARROWS, MORE MEN...
...A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS TIDE OF FEARLESS FOOLS READY TO FACE THEIR RUIN AS HE BURIES HIS WEAPON WITHIN THEM.
IN THE THROES OF SUCH CHAOS, DEATH CAN ARRIVE IN AN INSTANT.

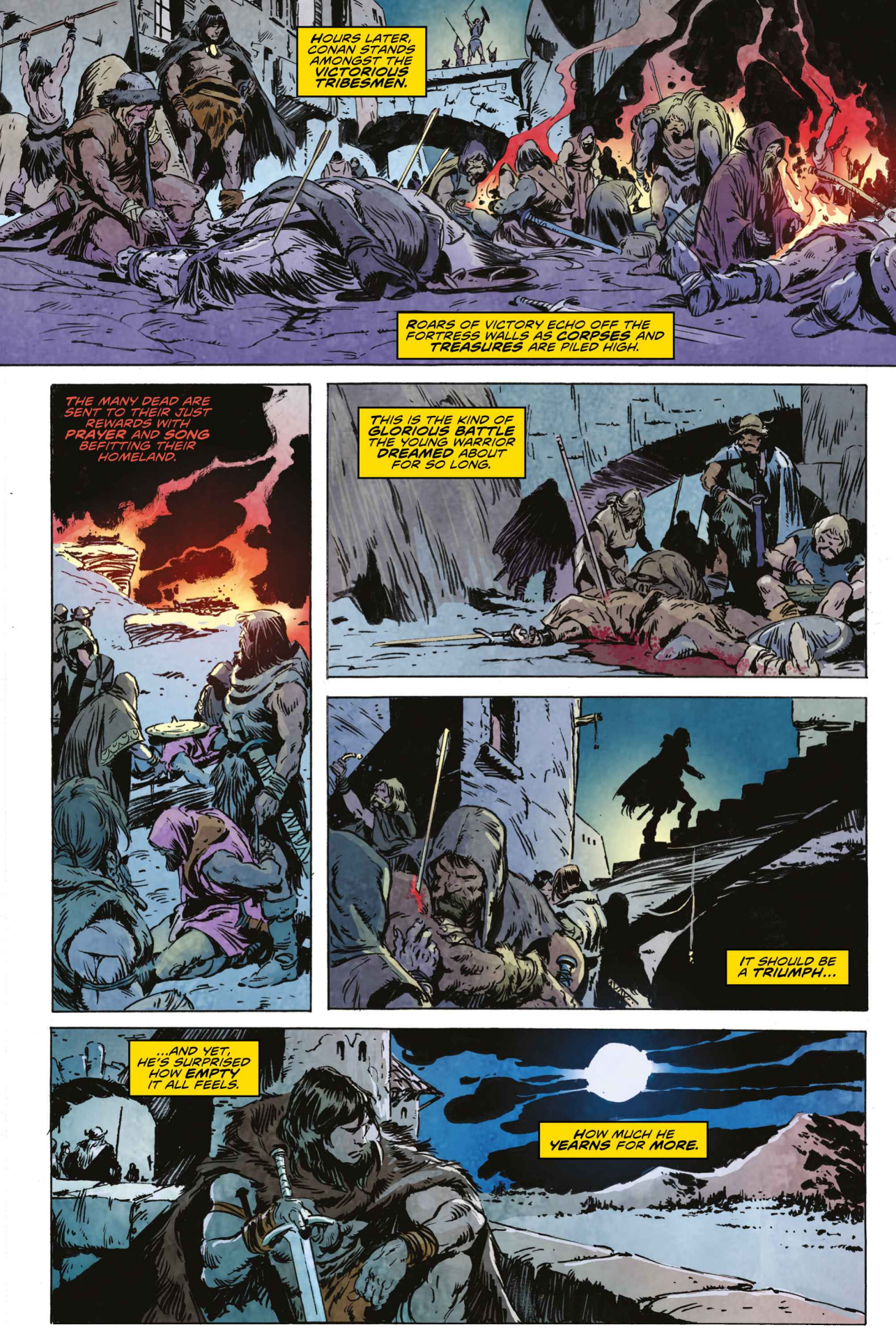
FOR ANY OTHER, THIS IS WHERE THEIR TALE WOULD END.
AN INSTANT'S REGRET BEFORE THE BECKONING OF OBLIVION.

BUT THIS SON OF CROM WILL NOT STAY DOWN.
NOT TODAY...

...NOT EVER.

WITH A SURGE OF STEEL, HE DRIVES BACK HIS FOES...

...AND FIGHTS ON 'TIL NONE ARE LEFT STANDING.


HOURS LATER, CONAN STANDS AMONGST THE VICTORIOUS TRIBESMEN.
ROARS OF VICTORY ECHO OFF THE FORTRESS WALLS AS CORPSES AND TREASURES ARE PILED HIGH.
THE MANY DEAD ARE SENT TO THEIR JUST REWARDS WITH PRAYER AND SONG BEFITTING THEIR HOMELAND.
THIS IS THE KIND OF GLORIOUS BATTLE THE YOUNG WARRIOR DREAMED ABOUT FOR SO LONG.
IT SHOULD BE A TRIUMPH...
...AND YET, HE'S SURPRISED HOW EMPTY IT ALL FEELS.
HOW MUCH HE YEARNS FOR MORE.

EVERY ITEM GATHERED, EVERY JEWEL OR WEAPON...
...THEY EACH HAVE THEIR OWN STORY TO TELL.
THE GLINT OF A FOREIGN BLADE CATCHES CONAN'S EYE.
WELL BALANCED, WELL FORGED...
...THE MARKINGS ARE UNKNOWN TO HIM BUT SUGGEST SUBSTANCE AND LEGACY.
A GLIMPSE OF LANDS BEYOND TOLD TO HIM BY HIS GRANDFATHER.

THE FROZEN REACHES OF THE NORTHLANDS.
SEEDY CITIES...

THE SEA SWEPT COASTS OF THE WEST.
THE SCORCHING DESERTS IN THE SOUTH.
...AND FIERCE JUNGLES.
EACH ONE BRIMMING WITH DANGER AND DELIGHT.

BEFORE SUNLIGHT STRIKES AND HIS COUNTRYMEN STIR, CONAN FEELS A DEEP WANDERLUST SETTLE INTO HIS SOUL.
HE KNOWS WHAT HE MUST DO.
SET WITH STRANGE STEEL...
...AND A HEARTY HELM...
...HE'LL LEAVE CIMMERIA FOR THE FIRST TIME.
AS HIS FOOTSTEPS CRUSH THROUGH CRISP MORNING SNOW, THE CIMMERIAN PONDERS HIS FUTURE...

WHAT GLORY YET LAYS BEFORE HIM?
WHAT STORIES WILL BE TOLD OF HIS GRAND ADVENTURES?

IT'S TIME TO FIND OUT.

ONWARD INTO THE GREAT UNKNOWN.

A NEW ERA OF ADVENTURE BEGINS IN
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1!

## A WORD FROM THE WISE

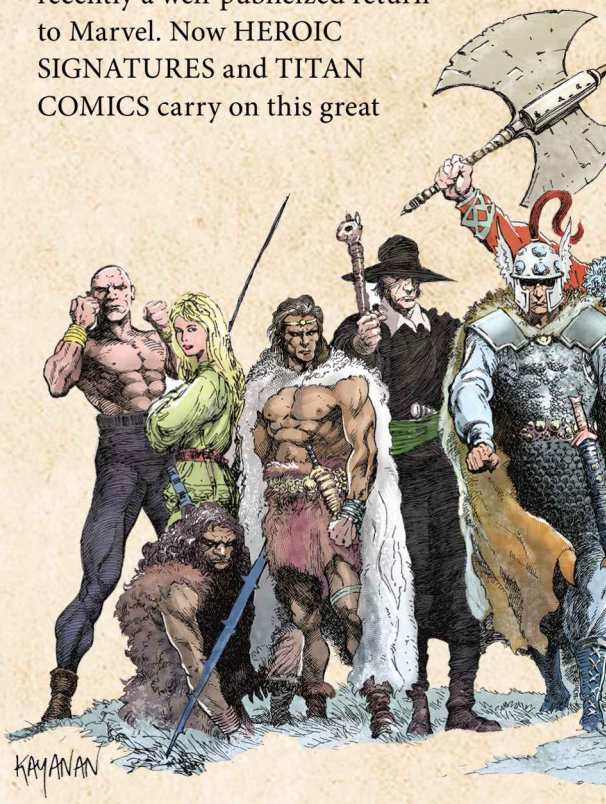
# HITHER CAME CONAN

by Jeffrey Shanks

When CONAN THE CIMMERIAN first appeared in the pages of the pulp magazine WEIRD TALES in 1932, it not only marked the debut of writer ROBERT E. HOWARD's most famous character, but also the dawn of the barbarian archetype in popular culture. Without CONAN as a prototype, there would be no He-Man, no Khal Drogo, no GOD OF WAR, no barbarian class in D&D.

Created at the height of America's Great Depression, when the public's mistrust of the structural pillars of civilization was at its peak, CONAN, a thief, pirate, and mercenary was the perfect anti-hero. After all, it was an era when politicians and financial institutions were the enemy, and bank robbers were the folk heroes. Over the next century, CONAN would continue to resonate with those who hold a cynical eye towards authority—and perhaps that is why he remains such a popular character in increasingly cynical times.

As with other great fictional archetypes like Dracula, Sherlock Holmes, or Superman, CONAN too has transcended his original prose medium, appearing in films, television, animation, video games, RPGs, and of course comicbooks. It is in this last form that CONAN has arguably achieved his greatest success, first appearing in bootleg Mexican comics in the 1950s and '60s, then becoming one of the best-selling titles for Marvel in the 1970s and '80s. This was followed by a critically acclaimed relaunch by Dark Horse in the early 2000s and more recently a well-publicized return to Marvel. Now HEROIC SIGNATURES and TITAN COMICS carry on this great




tradition, and what better way to relaunch such a storied character, then a recounting of the first significant event of his youth: the sack of Venarium?

It was at the Aquilonian fortified settlement of Venarium that a teenaged CONAN—already bigger than most full-grown men—would receive his baptism of blood. It was at Venarium that CONAN would get his first glimpse of civilization as one of the horde of

Cimmerians that overwhelmed and destroyed the frontier town. And it is with Venarium, that we get a glimpse of HOWARD's critical commentary on the hubris of imperialistic overreach. The sack of Venarium is first referenced in the original CONAN story "BEYOND THE BLACK RIVER," recounted in flashback by an older CONAN -- ironically working as a scout for Aquilonia in a similarly doomed attempt at colonization.

It's in this story that one of the characters voices HOWARD's own take on the millennia-long struggle between barbarism and civilization:

"Civilization is unnatural. It is a whim of circumstance. And barbarism must always ultimately triumph."

HOWARD wrote those words in an era when colonial empires were beginning to crumble and modern technology was just beginning to explode; and yet nearly a century later, these concepts are still relevant as we see anxieties about social media overload and the environmental consequences of technological advancement. Sometimes modern civilization can feel pretty unnatural, and CONAN remains a refreshing alternative perspective and his adventures make one helluva a great read!

**"ROBERT E. HOWARD GROUP SHOT" – Rafael Kayanan**

1. Ace Jessel
2. Valeria
3. Grom
4. Bran Mak Morn
5. Solomon Kane
6. Cormac Mac Art
7. Wulfhere
8. Kull
9. Conan of Cimmeria
10. Francis Xavier Gordon – "El Borak"
11. Robert Ervin Howard
12. Wild Bill Clanton
13. Esau Cairn
14. Turlogh Dubh O'Brien
15. Sonya of Rogatino
16. Sailor Steve Costigan
17. "Dark" Agnes de Chastillon
18. Breckinridge Elkins
19. Brule

**BACK IN PRINT - REMASTERED, OVERSIZED OMNIBUS EDITIONS!**

# CONAN'S ORIGINAL COMIC ADVENTURES ARE BACK AND BETTER THAN EVER!

NEW! FIRST TIME IN COMIC-BOOK FORM!
CONAN THE BARBARIAN
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
TO THE DEATH!
THE COMING OF CONAN!
ROY THOMAS • JOHN BUSCEMA • BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF
CONAN
THE BARBARIAN
Pulse-Pounding Premiere Issue
SWORD VS. SORCERY IN A WORLD BEYOND TIME
TWO OF THE MOST THRILLING CONAN EPICS OF ALL
THE ORIGINAL COMICS OMNIBUS

**The definitive collections of classic *Conan the Barbarian* and *The Savage Sword of Conan* featuring stories by Roy Thomas, Barry Windsor-Smith and John Buscema!**

Features high quality color restoration work, to make the strips feel as close to the original experience as possible!

HEROIC Signatures

AVAILABLE IN ALL GOOD STORES AND ONLINE

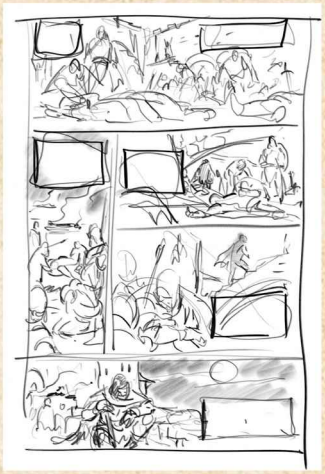
**TITAN-COMICS.COM**

TITAN COMICS

© 2023 Conan Properties International LLC ["CPI"]. CONAN, CONAN THE BARBARIAN, CONAN THE CIMMERIAN, HYBORIA, THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN, and related logos, characters, names, and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks or registered trademarks of CPI. Heroic Signatures is a trademark of Cabinet Licensing LLC.

# INTERIOR
## DEVELOPMENT

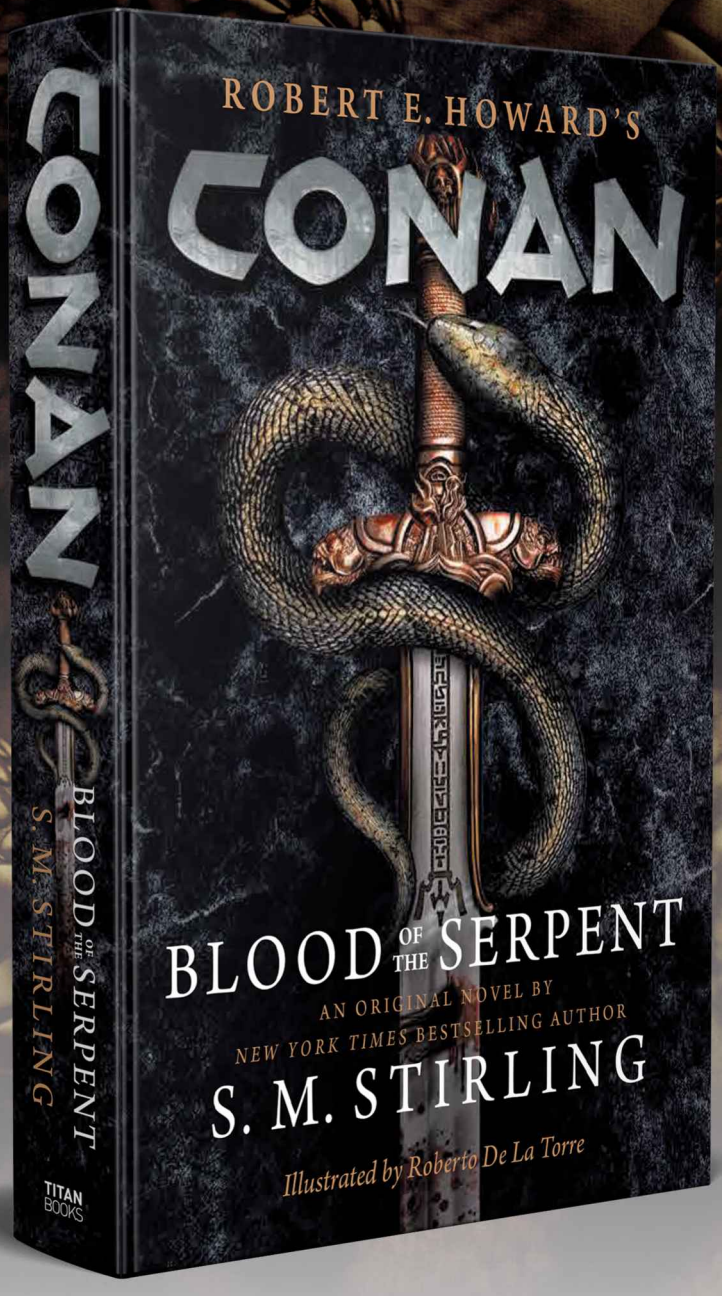
**Presented here are the humble beginnings of Conan comics from thumbnails through to final lettering.**



HOURS LATER, CONAN STANDS AMONGST THE VICTORIOUS TRIBESMEN.
ROARS OF VICTORY ECHO OFF THE FORTRESS WALLS AS LOOTING AND TREASURES ARE PILED HIGH.
THE MANY DEAD ARE SENT TO THEIR LOST ANCESTORS WITH PRAISE FOR THEIR BATTLING TRIBE.
THIS IS THE KIND OF GLORIOUS BATTLE THE YOUNG WARRIOR DREAMED ABOUT FOR SO LONG.
IT SHOULD BE A TRIUMPH...
AND YET HE'S SURPRISED HOW EMPTY IT ALL FEELS.
HOW MUCH HE YEARNS FOR MORE.

ALL BLEED ART MUST EXTEND TO SOLID LINE
TITLE CONAN
ISSUE # 1
PG. 6
ARTIST
PRINTS AT 22
FOR DOUBLE PAGE SPREAD: CUT AT SHOWN, ABUT PAGE EDGES, TAPE ON BACK. DO NOT OVERLAP.

# THE PULSE-POUNDING RETURN OF CONAN!



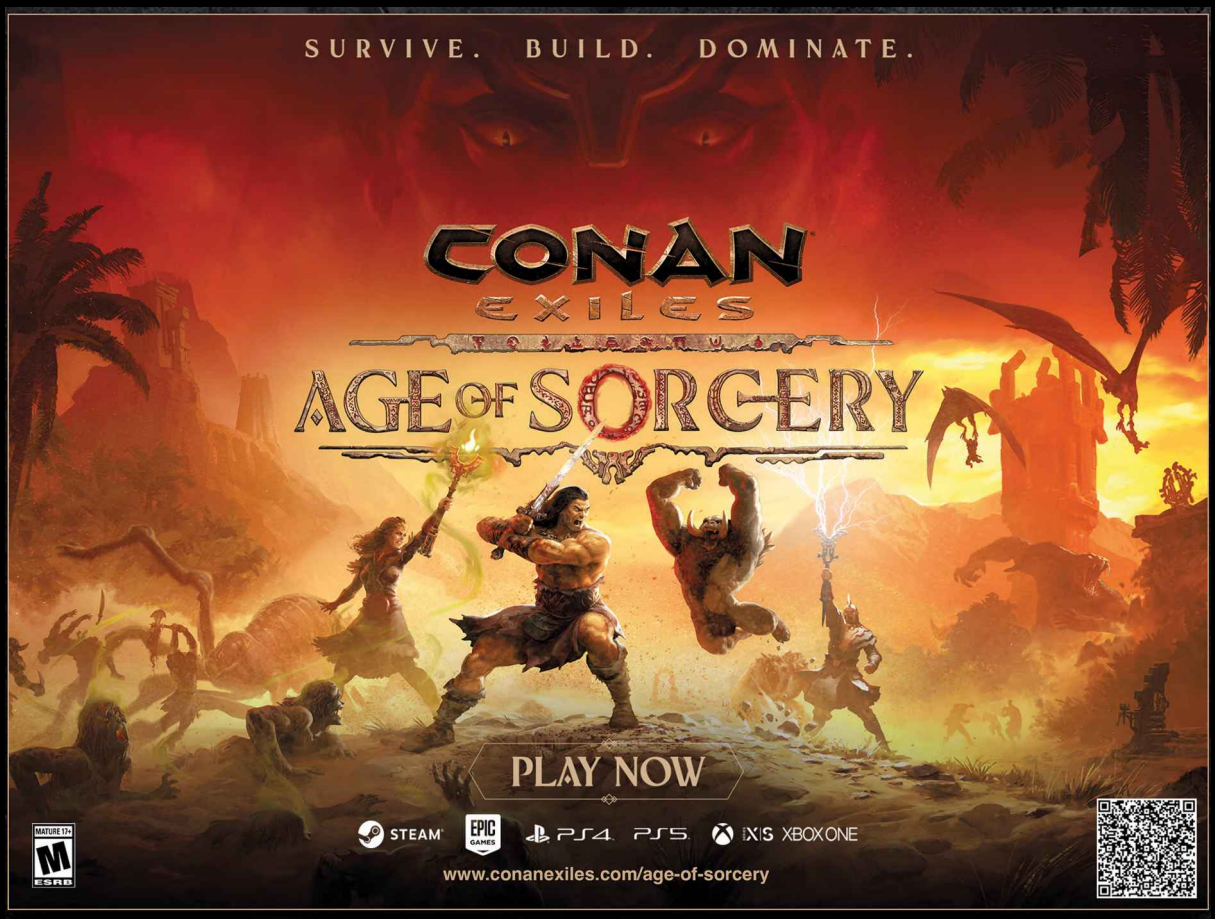

## An all-new adventure from *NYT* bestselling author S.M. Stirling

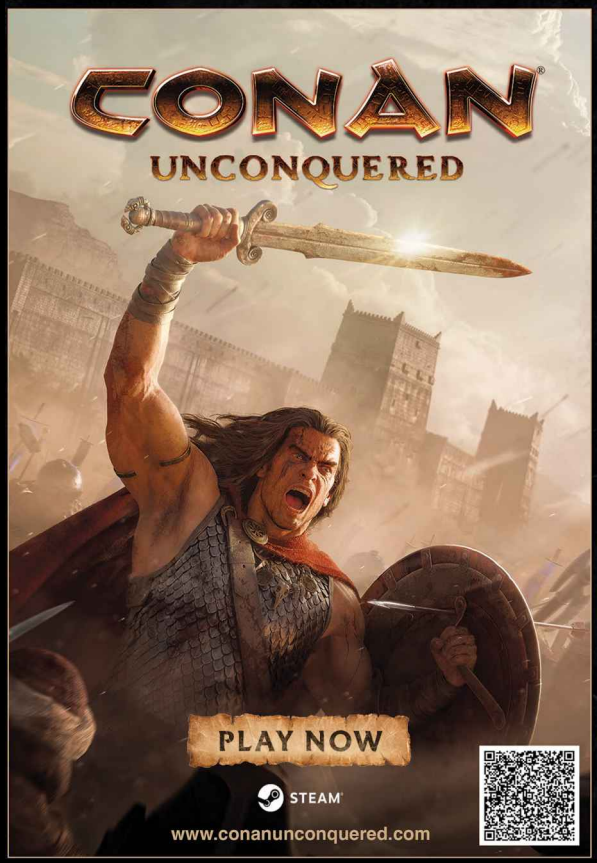
TITANBOOKS.COM

© 2023 Conan Properties International LLC

## CHAIN MAIL

Crom commands you! Pay tribute in thanks and kind words to honor the return of Conan the Barbarian. Send your thoughts and comments to **chainmail@conan.com.**


SURVIVE. BUILD. DOMINATE.
CONAN
EXILES
AGE OF SORCERY
PLAY NOW
STEAM
EPIC GAMES
PS4
PS5
XBOX ONE
www.conanexiles.com/age-of-sorcery


CONAN
UNCONQUERED
PLAY NOW
STEAM
www.conanunconquered.com

CONAN
CHOP CHOP
PLAY NOW
STEAM
PS4
PS5
XBOX ONE
www.conanchopchop.com